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Questionnaires concerning family life programs in Georgia public schools were sent to 523 home economics teachers to determine the extent, subject matter content, and the kinds of teachers and their preparation for teaching. Thirty-eight percent replied. The study showed that at least 155 family life education programs were listed in Georgia in 1966-67. Most courses were offered to juniors and seniors and were 1-year courses. Family list courses were generally taught by home economics teachers; approximately one-third had master's degrees; nearly one-half had taken graduate courses in family and child development. The major difficulties in providing family life courses were lack of available teachers and scheduling. Recommendations were that: (1) More schools should be encouraged to offer family life education, not only to juniors and seniors but also to seventh and eighth graders. (2) Research is needed to determine the length of the family life courses. (3) Family and child development units in regular home economics classes should emphasize different concepts in each year. (4) Teachers of family life education courses should be expected to take graduate courses in family and child development, and (5) A survey of available teachers should be made and distributed to school administrators. The questionnaire and the data in tabular form are included. (FP)

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A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

IN GEORGIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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1968

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN HOME ECONOMICS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN GEORGIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by

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This report is a project of the
Georgia Research Coordinating Unit,
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CHAPTER I

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

Preparation for the occupation of homemaking has always been and continues to be the major goal of home economics at the secondary school level. The scope of the program has expanded from basic skills in clothing construction and food preparation to emphasize interpersonal relationships and management of resources. Programs are more and more being planned for boys as well as girls as the role of homemaker is being assumed by both husbands and wives.

Concern about the increasing number of teenage marriages, the percentage of young marriages ending in divorce, and the number of teenage girls giving birth to illegitimate children has prompted many groups to suggest sex education in public schools. The Georgia Department of Public Health, the Department of Family and Children Services, and the Georgia Congress of Parents and Teachers are among these groups.

Many questions have been asked about the scope of family life education in Georgia's schools. Not all groups asking these questions seem to be aware of the efforts made through home economics. Because of this growing interest and the concern of home economics educators, this study was undertaken.

Statement of the problem. A description of family life education programs in Georgia public schools that would reveal the quantity as well as the scope of subject matter content was the problem selected for this

research project. The specific questions that seemed to require answers were:

1. How many schools offer family life programs?
2. At what grade levels are programs offered?
3. How many students are enrolled in these courses?
4. What is the length of time for courses in family life education?
5. What emphases or concepts are taught in family living courses and in each year of home economics?
6. Who teaches courses in family life education?
7. What kind of college preparation have the teachers had?
8. Why are family life courses not included in the curriculum?
9. What are the possibilities of offering a family life program in schools where it is not currently being offered?

The objectives. The specific questions listed above gave direction to the selection of the following objectives:

1. To determine the extent of family life programs in Georgia public schools
2. To ascertain the concepts or subject matter content emphasized in family life programs
3. To determine the kinds of teachers in these programs and their preparation for teaching
4. To discover the reasons why family life education programs are not offered and the possibility of their being offered in the future

The limitations of the study. The study was limited to the school year 1966-67, and to the home economics teachers included on lists issued by the State Department of Education, Fulton County Public Schools, and Atlanta Public Schools.

The definitions of terms. The definitions given below are those used as a basis for this study but are consistent with generally used terms.

1. Family life education is any course that gives major emphasis to the area of human development and the family whether it be considered home economics, family relations, sociology or psychology.

2. Home economics education refers to any course that includes all areas of home economics. The subject includes not only human development and the family but also food and nutrition, housing, management and family economics, and textiles and clothing.

3. Vocational home economics teachers are those who are reimbursed for over time work such as directing of Future Homemakers, teaching adult classes, supervising home projects, and attending in-service meetings. Non-vocational teachers are not reimbursed nor required to assume the above responsibilities although most of them do serve as advisors to Future Homemakers.

This chapter has stated the problem, listed questions of concern, outlined the objectives, given the limitations, and defined the terms. Chapter two gives an explanation of the methodology used.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

This chapter summarizes the research procedures utilized to (1) develop the questionnaire, (2) select the population, (3) collect the data, and (4) analyze the data.

The development of the questionnaire. Each of the nine questions outlined in chapter one was used to formulate the various sections of the questionnaire. The first question ascertained whether or not the school offered a program of family life education. The second section asked for the grade level, number of courses, total enrollment, concepts, length of course, teacher's name and her preparation. This section was completed only by those teachers who answered "yes" to the first question. The third section was completed by those teachers who answered "no" to the first section. It asked why there was not a program and what was the possibility of having such a program in the future, according to the school administration. The fourth section asked what family and child development concepts were taught in home economics courses. (See Appendix I for sample questionnaire.)

The questionnaire was pilot-tested with a group of experienced teachers studying full time at the University of Georgia. Revisions were made in accord with their suggestions.

Selection of the population. All teachers listed by the Vocational

Division of the State Department of Education were sent a questionnaire. However, only one letter (see Appendix II for sample letter) was sent to each school. Letters were also sent to teachers on the lists supplied by the Fulton County and Atlanta school systems. These two systems have the majority of non-vocational teachers in the state.

The decision was made to send a questionnaire to all teachers in an effort to identify as many programs of family life education as possible. A random sampling could not have resulted in as many identified programs.

Collection of the data. The questionnaire was sent to teachers in 522 schools. A follow-up was not sent; therefore the return was not as high as possible.

The number of schools represented in the study is 199, or 38.12%. The researcher feels that most teachers who had programs of family life education returned the questionnaire whereas teachers who did not failed to do so.

Analysis of the data. The answers to each question were tabulated. Questionnaires that were poorly answered or largely incomplete were discarded. Percentages were computed for those data that were appropriate for this type of statistics. The remaining data are presented in summarized totals.

The data are presented in four sections and sixteen tables. Each section represents an objective stated in the first chapter.

This chapter has described the methodology used in the study. The

next chapter presents the data and the last chapter contains the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER III

THE DATA

The data obtained from the 199 schools reported in this study are presented in four sections: (1) extent of family life program, (2) concepts taught, (3) type and preparation of teachers, and (4) promise for the future.

Extent of family life programs. Almost four of five schools returning questionnaires reported a family life education program. However, the data in Table I cannot be interpreted as representing the extent of such programs in Georgia schools. The researcher has stated earlier that a subjective analysis leads to the conclusion that teachers without a program tended not to return the questionnaire. One can conclude that there were at least 155 programs in Georgia in 1966-67.

Table II reveals that family life education programs were offered more often to twelfth graders than to any group. Approximately two of five programs were limited to seniors, and one of four were for eleventh and twelfth graders. A few programs were available to junior high students and a few enrolled students of all grades in the same class.

Enrollment data are presented in Table III and reveal that three-fourths of the students were in the eleventh or twelfth grade. A total of 9142 were enrolled in family life education programs.

The length of time allotted to family life courses is summarized in

Table IV. The majority (53.4%) were for an entire school year. Most of the remainder (36.2%) were for a semester. The proportion for a year was greater at the twelfth grade level (93 of 130 programs).

TABLE I

NUMBER OF FAMILY LIFE PROGRAMS IN
GEORGIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

	Number	Percent
Schools reporting a program	155	77.9
Schools reporting no program	44	22.1
Total schools reporting	199	100.0

TABLE II

NUMBER OF FAMILY LIFE PROGRAMS REPORTED IN GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOLS BY GRADES; ALSO NUMBER OF CLASSES IN EACH SCHOOL BY GRADES

Grade	Schools with programs by grades		Classes in schools by grades	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
12	74	42.3	133	41.6
11-12	52	29.7	84	26.3
11	6	3.4	20	6.3
10-12	5	2.9	12	3.8
10-11	3	1.7	8	2.5
10	4	2.3	4	1.3
9-12	5	2.9	15	4.7
9	17	9.7	17	5.3
8-12	1	.6	4	1.3
8-9	2	1.1	8	2.5
8	2	1.1	4	1.3
7	4	2.3	11	3.4
Totals	175	100.0	320	100.0

TABLE III

ENROLLMENT IN FAMILY LIFE CLASSES IN GEORGIA
HIGH SCHOOLS AT VARIOUS GRADE LEVELS

Grade	Enrollment	Percent
12	3958	43.3
11-12	2365	25.9
11	547	6.0
10-12	118	1.3
10-11	250	2.7
10	115	1.3
9-12	427	4.7
9	624	6.8
8-12	60	.7
8-9	260	2.8
8	95	1.0
7	323	3.5
Totals	9142	100.0

TABLE IV

LENGTH OF FAMILY LIFE COURSES AT EACH GRADE LEVEL

	Number of classes		
Grade level	Year	Semester	Less than a semester
12	93	37	3
11-12	67	16	1
11	10	7	3
10-12			12
10-11		8	
10		4	
9-12		5	10
9	1	16	
8-12		4	
8-9		8	
8		4	
7		7	4
Totals	171	116	33
Percent	53.4	36.2	10.3

Concepts taught. The concepts selected for response are those listed in "Education for Family Living for Juniors and Seniors, Home Economics Education in Georgia", 1967. No concepts were identified for the home economics courses; the questions were open-ended.

The concepts presented in Table V are those identified for the courses taught to juniors and seniors. The total range for the seven concepts was narrow (98-115). This would indicate that approximately equal emphasis was given to each concept. The "individual in the family" was the concept given the most emphasis, with "children in the family" and "self-understanding" following very closely. Two other concepts--"marriage as a way of life" and "management of family resources"-- were of almost equal importance. "Housing for the family" and "familes in our society and other cultures" were the least often included.

The next four tables present the family and child development concepts taught in each of the four years of home economics. Table VI reveals that the most important concept in first year home economics was "children in the family." The next two concepts were "self-understanding" and "personal improvement", and "the individual in the family." Second year, Table VII, emphasized the "individual in the family", "children in the family", and "management of personal and family resources", in that order. "Marriage as a way of life" was the top concept in third and fourth years, Table VIII and IX, followed by "children in the family" and "management of resources". These data revealed a great

amount of similarity in the family and child development units in each of the four years of home economics.

A comparison of concepts by rank order for each year is presented in Table X. "Children in the family" ranked first in first year and second in every other year. "Self-understanding" was important in first year, ranking second, but of increasingly less importance in the other three years. "The individual in the family" was more important in second year than any other year. "Marriage as a way of life" ranked first in third and fourth year home economics and last in first year. "Dating problems" was limited to second and third years. "Preparation for parenthood" and "courtship and engagement" were emphasized only in fourth year. The ranked concepts seem to reveal more scope and sequence than the previous four tables.

TABLE V

CONCEPTS INCLUDED IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION COURSES

Concept	12th	11-12	Total
The individual in the family	68	47	115
Children in the family	67	46	113
Self-understanding	67	46	113
Marriage as a way of life	64	47	111
Management of family resources	66	45	111
Housing for the family	64	40	104
Families in our society and other cultures	57	41	98

TABLE VI

FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS INCLUDED
IN FIRST YEAR HOME ECONOMICS COURSES

Concept	Number
Children in the family	134
Self-understanding and personal improvement	84
The individual in the family	78
Management of personal and family resources	32
Mother and baby care	10
Families in our society and other cultures	4
Marriage as a way of life	2

TABLE VII

FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS INCLUDED IN SECOND YEAR HOME ECONOMICS COURSES

Concept	Number
The individual in the family	65
Children in the family	56
Management of personal and family resources	52
Marriage as a way of life	33
Self-understanding	30
Dating problems and etiquette	26
Families in our society and other cultures	15
Mother and baby care	8

TABLE VIII

FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS INCLUDED
IN THIRD YEAR HOME ECONOMICS COURSES

Concept	Number
Marriage as a way of life	75
Children in the family	57
Management of personal and family resources	44
Families in our society and other cultures	19
The individual in the family	18
Self-understanding	12
Dating, morality, sex education	10
Mother and baby care	11

TABLE IX

FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS INCLUDED
IN FOURTH YEAR HOME ECONOMICS COURSES

Concept	Number
Marriage as a way of life	34
Children in the family	30
Management of family resources	22
Preparation for parenthood	19
The individual in the family	16
Families in our society and other cultures	9
Self-understanding	8
Courtship and engagement	5
Mother and baby care	4

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF CONCEPTS INCLUDED IN EACH YEAR
OF HOME ECONOMICS BY RANK ORDER

Concepts	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Children in the family	1st	2nd	2nd	2nd
Self-understanding and personal improvement	2nd	5th	6th	7th
The individual in the family	3rd	1st	5th	5th
Management of personal and family resources	4th	3rd	3rd	3rd
Mother and baby care	5th	8th	8th	9th
Families in our society and other cultures	6th	7th	4th	6th
Marriage as a way of life	7th	4th	1st	1st
Dating problems and etiquette	--	6th	7th	--
Preparation for parenthood	--	--	--	4th
Courtship and engagement	--	--	--	8th

Type and preparation of teachers. A great majority of teachers of family life education courses were home economics teachers. Data in Table XI reveal that 87.4% were in this category. Other types were social studies teachers, physical education teachers, and counselors.

Table XII presents data about preparation of teachers at the bachelor's degree level. These data substantiate the same data as Table XI since the same percentage received B.S.H.E. degrees as were home economics teachers.

Sixty-four of the 199 teachers held a master's degree. A little more than two-thirds had majored at this level in home economics education. One-fourth had majored in some area other than home economics. Only two had majored in family development. These data are presented in Table XIII.

The data in Table XIV indicate more preparation in family and child development than do the data presented in the above paragraph. Nearly half (44.8%) had at least one graduate course in family and child development. Thirteen of the 199 teachers had more than four courses in this area at the graduate level.

TABLE XI

WHO TEACHES FAMILY LIFE COURSES IN GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOLS

Type of teacher	Number of schools	Percent
Home economics teacher	174	87.4
Social science teacher	18	9.0
Physical education teacher	3	1.5
Math teacher	1	.5
English teacher	1	.5
Counselor	2	1.0
Total schools	199	100.0

TABLE XII

PREPARATION OF TEACHERS

Degree	Number	Percent
B.S.H.E. degree- Education major	140	87.5
Other bachelor's degree	16	10.0
AB degree	4	2.5
Totals	160	100.0

Major		
Social science	18	10.7
Elementary education	1	.6
Guidance	1	.6
English	1	.6
Science	1	.6
Home economics	7	4.1
Home economics education	140	82.8
Totals	160	100.0

TABLE XIII

NUMBER OF TEACHERS OF FAMILY LIFE PROGRAMS
WITH MASTER'S DEGREES

Major	Number	Percent
Home economics education	44	68.8
Family development	2	3.1
Clothing and textiles	2	3.1
Other than home economics areas	16	25.0
Totals	64	100.0

TABLE XIV

GRADUATE COURSES IN FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
AS REPORTED BY TEACHERS

Number of courses	Teachers	
	Number	Percent
One	24	12.1
Two	26	13.1
Three	17	8.5
Four	9	4.5
More	13	6.5
None	110	55.3
Totals	199	100.0

Plans for the future. One of the major questions about family life education is why many schools do not include the subject in the curriculum. The data in Table XV indicate that unavailability of teachers is the most usual reason. Scheduling problems and subject covered in other courses were the other two major reasons.

The respondents asked the principal or curriculum director the possibility of adding family life education to the curriculum. Nearly half said it would be added in the future. Another 18.4% said there was a possibility it could be added. Table XVI also reveals that 28.9% said there was no possibility of adding a course.

This chapter has presented the data. The last chapter summarizes the study and presents conclusions.

TABLE XV

WHY FAMILY LIFE COURSES ARE NOT INCLUDED
IN CURRICULUM OF GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL

Reasons	Number	Percent
Difficulty with scheduling and number of students	10	21.7
Lack of administrative support	4	8.7
Subject covered in other courses	9	19.6
No teacher available	15	32.6
Planned for near future	8	17.4
Total	46	100.0

TABLE XVI

PRINCIPAL'S OR CURRICULUM DIRECTOR'S REACTION
TO POSSIBILITY OF ADDING PROGRAM

Reaction	Number	Percent
Will be added in future	18	47.4
Possibility of adding it	7	18.4
No possibility of adding it	11	28.9
Offered but students do not elect it	1	2.6
Integration problem prohibits	1	2.6
Total	38	100.0

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

The problem of this project was to describe family life education programs in Georgia public schools so as to reveal the quantity as well as the scope of subject matter content. The specific objectives to (1) determine the extent of family life programs in Georgia public schools, (2) ascertain the concepts or subject matter content emphasized, (3) determine the kinds of teachers and their preparation for teaching, and (4) discover why family life education programs are not offered and the possibility of their being offered in the future.

A questionnaire was sent to all vocational home economics teachers and to non-vocational teachers in Fulton County and Atlanta School Systems. The total number of schools represented in the study was 199.

Conclusions. The following conclusions were drawn from the data:

1. At least 155 programs of family life education existed in Georgia public schools in 1966-67.

2. Family life programs were more often offered to juniors and seniors than to young students, with very few for young teenagers.

3. More courses were offered for a year than for any other length of time.

4. The seven major concepts identified in the Georgia curriculum material for the family life programs received almost equal emphasis.

5. The concepts taught in regular home economics classes had a great deal of similarity, with most concepts being repeated in all four years.

6. Discussion of dating problems was limited to second and third year; preparation for parenthood, courtship, and engagement were emphasized only in fourth year.

7. Home economics teachers were almost always the persons who taught family life courses.

8. Approximately one-third of the teachers of family life courses held a master's degree, usually with a major in home economics education.

9. Nearly half of the teachers had taken graduate courses in family and child development.

10. The major difficulties in providing family life courses were lack of available teachers and scheduling.

11. Nearly half of the schools where family life education was not offered said it would be in the future.

Recommendation. The above conclusions dictate the following recommendations:

1. More schools should be encouraged to offer family life education, not only to juniors and seniors, but also to seventh and eighth graders.

2. Research is needed to determine whether a year or a semester should be alloted to family life courses.

3. The family and child development units in regular home economics classes should emphasize different concepts in each year.

4. Teachers of family life education courses should be expected to take graduate courses in family and child development.

5. A survey of available teachers should be made and distributed to school administrators.

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE
CONCERNING FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

School_____

Address:_____

1. Do you have a program of family life education? YES_____ NO _____
   (Family life education is any course that give major emphasis to the area of human development and the family whether it be considered home economics, family relations, sociology, or psychology.)

2. If your answer is yes, complete the following questions. If it is no, go to question 3.

   (a) How many courses and at what grade levels are the courses offered?

Grade Level	Number of Classes	Total Number Enrolled

   (b) Check the following emphasis or concepts that are included and list any additional ones.

The individual in the family _____
Families in our society and other cultures _____
Marriage as a way of life _____
Children in the family _____
Management of family resources _____
Housing for the family _____
Self-understanding _____

   (c) How long does the course last?

A semester _____
A year _____

   (d) Who teaches the course?

Home economics teacher _____
Social science teacher _____
Physical education teacher _____
Other _____

(e) What preparation has the teacher had?

B.S.H.E. degree-education major _____
Other bachelor's degree _____
Major _____

Graduate courses in family and child development:

one _____
two _____
three _____
four _____
more _____

A master's degree:

Home economics education _____
Family development _____
Other home economics areas _____
Other than home economics _____

3. If your answer is no to question one, complete the following questions:

(a) List reasons why family life courses are not included in your curriculum.

(b) Ask your principal or curriculum director what possibility there is for including such courses and record his or her answer below.

4. What family and child development emphases or concepts do you include in your home economics courses? Use terms similar to those in question 2.

Year of home economics	Emphases or concepts
First year	
Second year	
Third year	
Four year	

APPENDIX II

TO: Home Economics Teachers

FROM: Aleene Cross

I think you know that all of us are trying to find more ways to reach boys and girls through home economics and family living courses. We are often asked how many students are being reached, at what grade level, and what is included in the course.

Would you help us by answering the enclosed questionnaire and returning it immediately? All questionnaires for one school are included in this letter. One answer per school will be sufficient. You will need to fill out the questionnaire even if you don't teach family living; the last question is about regular homemaking classes.

Many thanks for your help.